

A  
LETTER  
TO A  
MEMBER  
OF  
*J. W. C. L. Law*  
Parliament,  
Relating to the  
BILL  
AGAINST  
*Occasional Conformity,*  
IN  
The Last Session.

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L O N D O N,  
Printed for John Lawrence, at the Angel  
in the Poultry, 1703.

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# A LETTER, &c.

S I R,

**I** Can freely subscribe, both to the Eulogies you bestow on the Church of *England*, and the Censures you pass on such, who judging it unlawful to Communicate with her, yet for the sake of an Office, or Place, act contrary thereunto; but at the same time must confess, I know none chargeable herewith; those of my Acquaintance, that prefer the Worship of God in dissenting Assemblies, and yet occasionally join with us in the Liturgy, and at the Sacrament, do acknowledge, that this their Practice proceeds from the Value and Esteem they have for this part of the Catholick Church; and to testify their Love and Charity; I shall therefore, without further Preface, according to your Request, give you my Sentiments of the Bill you sent me a Copy of, now depending in your House, against *Occasional Conformity*, under these Four Heads: That it is unseasonable as to the time of its Proposal; Unserving to the Government; Unreasonable in it self; And like to prove of mischievous Consequence, if passed into a Law.

I. It is unseasonable as to the time of its Proposal: For

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1. This is a time wherein the Nation is engaged in an expensive War with *France* and *Spain*, and not only the Protestant Religion, but the Liberty of *Europe*, the Prize contended for: Therefore certainly a Union amongst all her Majesties Subjects, that value either our Religion or Government, is necessary to be continued.

2. We have many Protestant Allies of the same Perswasion with many of our Dissenters; and therefore unseasonable to create Jealousies and Distrust in them, by retrenching the Liberties now enjoyed, and imposing fresh Difficulties upon our Fellow Subjects, on account thereof, without any Provocation: For

3. Protestant Dissenters have, throughout a whole preceeding Reign, given undeniable Testimonies of their Loyalty, and have in this, as Cordially Addressed Her Majesty, as chearfully contributed by Taxes, as devoutly prayed for Her Prosperity, and as unfeignedly rejoiced at the Success of Her Armies and Navy, as any other of Her Subjects whatsoever; so that there is not the least shadow of Suspicion, that they are disaffected to the present Government and Settlement.

4. There are remaining great Debts contracted by the Government; and should the continuance of the War call for Loans, as formerly, this Bill will obstruct that speedy Advancement, which in the last Reign was observed to give no small Trouble and Mortification to the French Monarch.

5. Our Merchants, and others, are likely to sustain great Losses, by having their Estates abroad, and for want of Trade at Home, and at the same time to be incapacitated to serve their  
Queen,



Queen, their Country, and Themselves, in such Posts as their Abilities have Qualified them for, must needs aggravate their Sorrow.

II. It will be unserviceable to the Government, and that with respect both to Church and State.

1. It will be useless with respect to the Doctrines of the Church of *England*, there being a great Concord and Consent herein with the greatest Bodies of Dissenters affected by this Bill.

2. The Revenues and Preferments of the Church are sufficiently secured by Acts of Parliament, and no new Oaths or Tests are enjoined herein to exclude any from the Injoyment thereof.

3. This Bill will not alter the choice of Members to serve in Convocation; for none but the Reverend Clergy of the Church of *England* can Vote at Elections, or sit in that Assembly.

4. There can hereby be no additional Security to the State, for all great Places of Trust and Profit are in Her Majesties disposal; so that no disaffected Person (were there any such amongst the Dissenters) can be preferred without Her Favour: And whilst so Illustrious an Ornament of the Church of *England* sits on the Brittish Throne (and may Almighty God long Preserve Her there) we may expect, that the distinguishing Marks of Her Esteem will be placed on such, whose exemplary Piety and Zeal for that Church shall render them worthy thereof.

5. This Bill doth only bear hard on Men endow'd with Principles of Honour and Conscience (from whom little Danger is to be feared) whilst Persons of ill Designs, of any Denomi-

nation, will be at Liberty by compliance herewith (which such Men will never scruple) to prosecute them without restraint: For Atheists, Deists, Papists, and Hereticks, and such as adhere to the Interest of the *French* Tyrant, and the pretended Prince of *Wales*, the most dangerous Enemies we have, both to our Religion and Government, are not at all affected by this Bill.

6. Our Constitution is incomparably the best in the World, and its Excellency in great measure consists in that due Temperature there is between the Prerogative of the Crown, and the Liberty of the People; and this best secured by keeping both within those Bounds and Limits the Law (their Guardian Angel) hath circumscribed; for all Invasions here have a tendency, either to Tyranny, or Anarchy. Now it is neither difficult to distinguish, who are the Friends and Enemies of this admirable Constitution, and consequently intitled to the Favour and Protection, the Frowns and Displeasure of the Government; nor necessary more particularly to name who they were that signalized their Affection hereunto, by Concurring and Agreeing together, in a late Revolution, whereby both Church and Estate were preserved.

7. Protestant Dissenters gave an eminent Testimony of their Zeal for the Present Establishment, at a time when they were caressed by a Roman Catholick Prince, by generally refusing to consent (notwithstanding they had so lately smarted thereby) to complement away the Legal Security, both of Church and State, which at that time were accounted the greatest bar to the Introduction of Popery and Slavery amongst Us: This was so notoriously known, and

and so gratefully acknowledged by many Excellent Prelates, and others of Eminent Dignity and Station in the Church, that they confessed the Mistakes in prosecuting the Dissenters with so much Severity in the preceding Reign, and promised both from the Press and Pulpit to come to a better Temper towards them, pursuant to which they afterwards, with great Unanimity, procured an Act of Toleration.

It is not only the Inclination, but Interest of Protestant Dissenters, to Preserve our Constitution, and whilst Indulged have not the least Temptation to endeavour its Subversion ; for that would certainly involve in it their own Overthrow : And they are too many, and their Estates and Interests too considerable, to be necessary to such an Unnatural Destruction.

III. This Bill is Unreasonable in it self : Because,

1. It enacts a Penalty for those Actions, in Conjunction, which consider'd apart are Lawful : Holding Communion with the Church of *England* is Commendable ; the Frequenting other Congregations not only Tolerated, but such Meetings taken into the Protection of the Government, the Law providing, That the Disturbers of them be severely Punished ; the Accepting Marks of Her Majesty's Favour, and Undertaking an Office of Magistracy, being duly Called and legally Qualified, not only Lawful, but Necessary, and sometimes a Man's Indispensible Duty. From whence then Results the Crimes, so severely Animadverted on by this Bill ?



2. This Bill enacts Penalties, very much Disproportionable to and above the Demerit of the Crime committed, supposing there be any: For that which is forbidden by this Bill, under very surprizing Penalties, is not any Crime by the Law of God or Man, antecedent to the passing hereof.

3. This Bill limits no Day for Prosecution, and that for a Fact of that Nature, that Persons must necessarily be deprived of the means of making their Defence at any considerable distance of Time.

4. Notwithstanding the many Instances of various and notorious Mistakes, comitted even upon Oath, during the Prosecution of Dissenters in King *Charles* the Second's Reign, this Bill makes one Witness sufficient for Conviction of a Fact, where probably are Five Hundred Spectators; and thereby gives an ill Man an opportunity of Revenge.

5. This Bill gives the whole Penalty to the Informer, which must needs prove a great Temptation, to accuse Falsly and on slender Grounds, through Covetousness: A Vice so deeply rooted in Humane Nature since the Fall, that we have great Reason to be apprehensive of the fatal Consequences likely to ensue hereupon.

6. Doctors, Lawyers, and Friends, will be hereby unavoidable liable to be brought within the Penalties of this Bill, only for Visiting Sick and Dying Persons, for the performance of the Offices of Friendship, or their particular Professions, if any other Exhortation or Prayer be used, not according to the Liturgy,  
which



which the Case or Conscience of the Sick Person may suddenly require.

This Bill makes no Provision to exempt Foreign Protestant Churches, Collegiate Chappels and Hospitals, wherein other Forms than are prescribed by the Liturgy are daily used.

8. According to this Bill, a Man may be Fined to his utter Undoing, the Penalty quickly exceeding his Estate : Whereas by *Magna Charta*, and the Laws of the Land, all Mulcts are limited with a *Salvo contenemento*.

9. This Bill puts a Restraint upon Persons, statedly making use of such Ministers in Publick (notwithstanding by Law allowed the Exercise of their Ministerial Function) as they judge fitted for the benefit of their Souls : Whereas all are left at Liberty, to choose what Lawyers, for the Settlement of their Estates, and what Physicians, for the Health of their Bodies, (matters of less Importance) they please.

10. It seems unreasonable by Act of Parliament, not only to incapacitate Persons for holding any Office, or Place of Trust, in the Government, meerly on account of certain Rites and Modes of Worship, undetermined in Holy Writ, and to deprive those that are at present Invested therein ; but also to inflict severe Fines for Resorting to any Assemblies, where any Acts of Divine Worship are performed in other manner, than according to the Liturgy and Practice of the Church of *England*, although agreeing therewith in all the Essential and Fundamental Articles of Religion and Ordinances of Worship.

11. This Bill makes no Provision for such as have Offices forced on them, or for those  
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that are already in Employments of Trust, and cannot lay them down at pleasure, or for those that are intituled to Places by Purchase, who will be hereby liable to be deprived thereof, only because they use the Liberty given them by an Act of Parliament, which this Bill saith ought to be kept inviolable.

12. The Enacting Part in Penal Bills, especially where the Penalty is great, ought to be so plainly and clearly Expressed, as may be Intelligible to the meanest Capacity of such as are liable to be Affected thereby: Whereas in this Bill there is no small Ambiguity, what shall be esteemed the Practice of the Church of *England*, in regard it is so much diversified, with respect to the Celebration of Divine Service in Cathedrals and Parochial Churches; and also as to the Administration of Baptism, in Publick or Private, which some time or other may occasion such Interpretations, whereby Persons may be suddenly Ruined by Constructive Crimes. Instances of this kind we have seen within Remembrance.

13. Attending Divine Service once a Month, according to the Liturgy of the Church of *England*, would exempt Popish Recusants from the Penalties enacted in Queen *Elizabeth's* Reign, when the Government had great Reason to be Jealous, being continually allarum'd with Plots and Conspiracies: But by this Bill, any Person, having an Office, Civil or Military, or any Place of Trust or Command, although he frequent the Holy Communion once a Month, and attend Publickly Divine Service every Day, according to the Liturgy of the Church of *England*, yet if he do but once Resort (although

though occasionally ) to any Dissenting Congregation; allow'd by and under the Protection of the Law, presently a Fine of One Hundred Pounds is incurr'd, and at the Year's end a further Reckoning of Eighteen Hundred Twenty Five Pounds, unless the Informer is pleased to call for an Account sooner.

IV. This Bill, if pass'd into a Law, will be of mischievous Consequence. For,

1. First, It will contribute towards the Ruin of many Persons, who have Places and Employments relating to Her Majesty's Revenue, who will hereby be compelled to Quit them, rather than offer Violence to their Consciences.

2. It will deprive the Common-wealth of the Assistance of many Persons, very Valuable, both on the account of their Abilities and Piety in such Stations, wherein they would be admirably Useful, confining them to the Injoyment of the more private Satisfactions of a Retired Life.

3. It will deprive many of the Freemen of *England*, not only the Right they now have, of Voting at Elections, but also prevent their having of several Persons ( who have formerly served them and their Country faithfully ) to be their Representatives in Parliament, because they will decline that Service on account hereof.

4. It will very much obstruct Publick Charity towards Hospitals, and other Pious Foundations, by excluding many Persons from the Oversight thereof, as Governors fitly Qualified for that Trust, and for whose sake other Persons



sons would be induced to contribute more Liberally, than otherwise they will do.

5. Whereas there hath been, for a considerable time, great Concord and Unity amongst us; all Invidious Distinctions having been for the most part swallowed up in those harmless ones of *Protestant* and *Papist*, this Bill, if passed into a Law, will revive Old and create New Names of Discrimination amongst Protestants, and give occasion to hot and furious Spirits to write bitter Investives one against another, and thereby make Sport for the common Enemies of our Religion and Nation; it being observed, that since a Bill of this Nature was first moved in Parliament, there hath been more violent and venomous Pamphlets, written by Protestants against Protestants, than appeared extant all the last Reign.

6. There being very many Persons, who have an Ardent Zeal for the Church of *England*, (as by Law established) by Marriages, Relation and Interest, allied and linked to various Dissenting Families throughout the Kingdom, who by long Converse and Experience have entertained very favourable Opinions for them; and thereupon cannot but be impressed, with deep Resentments, at any unreasonable Treatment of their Dissenting Friends, which will necessarily disperse a general Dissatisfaction into all the parts of the Nation, should this Bill pass.

7. What Jealousies will hereby be raised in the Hearts of Her Majesty's Subjects, lest it should prepare a way for to introduce on the Stage all the Tragedies acted in a late Reign against Protestant Dissenters?

8. What



8. What a weakning of the Protestant Interest abroad would this be, to have such grounds of Contests and Animosities revived and encouraged amongst us; from a Sense whereof a Resolve was made, above Twenty Years past, in the Honourable House of Commons, That the Prosecution of Dissenters was Grievous to the Subject, a Weakening of the Protestant Interest, an Incouragement to Popery, and Dangerous to the Peace of the Kingdom.

9. This Bill, by its Restraints and Penalties, will exasperate Mens Spirits, and tear open those Wounds, which for a considerable time have been closing, ( to the Nation's and Church's Peace and Safety ) and thereby narrow and contract that Communion of Saints, consisting in a mutual Fellowship, and Participation in the Ordinances of Divine Worship, and of Love and Charity one towards another, which we all profess to Believe, and which ought to be Kept up and Maintained amongst Christians, as Members of the Catholick Church, professing the same Holy Religion, united under one Head, having the same common Enemies, whose greatest Hopes proceed from our Intestine Divisions : Whereas an undisturbed Injoyment of Native Rights, without unnecessary Distinctions and Impositions, will open a way for a freer Converse with one another, the ready means to create a Reciprocal Love and Esteem amongst Persons of Piety, Learning and Vertue, of whatsoever Denomination. As for those of another and worser Character, the Sowerness of whose Tempers, and contracted Prejudices, may for a time keep them  
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at a Distance, and Uneasy; their Interest will never be able to form any Party, considerable enough, to make the Government jealous.

10. If this Bill pass, Trade (on which the Honour and Wealth of the Nation so much depends) will be thereby much discouraged; for the promoting whereof, it is absolutely necessary Persons are made Easy in matters of Religion. Fines and Penalties, on this Account, do in a great measure render precarious those Estates Persons have the Prospect of acquiring thereby, and consequently prove a mighty Remora to Industry for their Attainment: And it hath been observed, that Trade never more visibly Flourished in this Nation, than since the Act for Indulgence passed.

11. Her Majesty (whom God long Preserve) will hereby be debarred of the Personal Service of many of Her Loyal Subjects, in Posts of Command, should any Invasion from Abroad, or Attempts at Home (which God avert) be made against Her Sacred Person, by such as are ready to embrace an Opportunity, to shew their Inclination for a Change of Government, in favour of the Pretended Prince of *Wales*. And though there is no reason to doubt, but that the far greatest part of those affected by this Bill, from Principles of steady Loyalty to the Queen, and of generous Love to their Country, will be giving all the Assistance they will be capable; yet we can hardly think, that humane Passion and Resentment, can be so perfectly subdued in others, as not to reply with those *Romans*, when solicited by the Orator to return from their Retirements, Let such fight the Battles, and face the Dangers of the Commonwealth;

monwealth, who share the Dignities and Preferments thereof.

But it may be objected, *That the Design of this Bill is to force People to a Conformity to, and thereby a likeing of the Liturgy and Ceremonies of the Church of England, a compliance wherewith would prevent all these Consequences.*

*Answer* 1. All those Persons that have no Places, nor expect any, and do now usually frequent Dissenting Congregations, will be hereby more firmly fixed in that Practice, by the Apprehensions they will have of the Hardships put upon their Friends, which naturally creates or increases Prejudices in Mens Minds.

2. As for those that have Places of Advantage, 'tis probable some of them will Conform; but since it will be from Force and not Conviction, which seldom proves Efficacious enough to alter Mens Opinions and Affections, but the same Passions and Inclinations will remain, with deeper Impressions of Resentment from a sense of an Invasion made on their Liberty in Religious concerns; no Advantage will accrue to the Church hereby.

3. Others, from a lively Sense of the worth of Souls, and that Glory they are made for, and capacitated to enjoy, will not for any worldly Profit or Preferment be diverted from worshipping their Great Creator in such Assemblies which they are perswaded (True or False it matters not) will most effectually conduce to the obtaining thereof.

4. We have had woful Experience, that all those greater Severities, practised not many  
Years



Years past, were so far from producing such a Compliance, and lessening the Number of Dissenters, that they have instead thereof confirmed the Remark long since made, That the Prosecution of Persons for matters of Opinion, not Fundamental, hath always proved to the Prejudice of the Established Church and State, and a Toleration always to their Advantage.

5. It is readily confessed by all Differing Parties amongst Us, that there are a great many very Learned and Excellent Persons in our Publick Churches, who constantly entertain their Auditors with admirable Discourses, full of nervous Arguments, Pathetick and Pious Oratory, to perswade them to a Holy and Religious Life, in order to Eternal Happiness; but then at the same time it must be acknowledged, upon a serious Survey of past Actions, that the most likely way for these to be successful, for the wearing off those Prejudices, which any through Education or Custom, may be possessed with, is for the Government to treat Men with Mildness and Gentleness, and all those alluring Methods as are suitable to the true genuine Spirit of the Church of *England*, and our most Holy Religion.

S I R,

Having thus plainly given you my Thoughts, upon serious Reflection thereon, I cannot imagine what are the Springs and Motives, that gave birth to such a Bill at this time, wherein there appears so universal a Satisfaction amongst all Persons, the *Jacobite* Interest excepted; no Symptoms of Sorrow or Discontent appearing in the Faces, Words, or Actions of Dissenters; All  
Pleased



Pleased and Rejoycing at Her Majesties happy Accession to the Throne, and the early Fruits of an Exemplary Piety, Her most excellent Proclamation for the Suppression of Vice, Immorality, and Profaneness (Enemies of all others the most mischievous to a Nation) which Royal Design, many worthy Persons, both of the Church of *England*, and Dissenting Congregations, throughout the Kingdom, are Prosecuting by Methods, approved by the concurrent Suffrages of very many Noble Personages, Pious Prelates, and Learned Judges: And that, which seems to me a happy Prefage of Success, is, that in the Management thereof there appears all the Marks of real Friendship, Love and Esteem for one another. Pity then it is to interrupt this Harmony, stop the Progress of so glorious a Design, break in pieces these Societies, by inventing new engines of Division, and subject a considerable part of them to the Revenge of the worse part of Mankind (for such are the disobliged Persons hereat) by giving them so great an opportunity by malicious Prosecutions, to tare and shatter their Estates and Fortunes in pieces.

It must be owned, That there is a general Agreement and Concord between Us, and the greatest bodies of Dissenters, in all the Fundamental Articles of Faith; and I think, with the greatest part of the Liturgy too. What Danger then threatens our Established Church? Or what Designs can be managed by such Persons to eclipse her Glory, or undermine her Constitution?

Every Government indeed ought to have Regard to the Glory of Almighty God, by injoyning a regular Performance of Divine Worship

in Publick Assemblies, and asserting the just Power and Authority of the Magistrate, and that Deference and Obedience due to them; and also to the promoting the true Welfare and Happiness of the People, by protecting them in the free Injoyment of their Civil and Religious Rights, Properties, and Liberties; and whilst these Ends are secured, I can see no Reason for Fines and Penalties, to ruin whole Families, because of some Disagreements about Modes, Ceremonies, and such Ritual Administrations, as can contribute very little to make Men either Wiser or Better.

Sad indeed it is to think, with what Eagerness the Altercations about these have been managed; sadder, that Cause should be given for their Continuance, when all the Acquisitions to be gained thereby can never compensate for the Loss of Charity, likely to be sustained in the Conflict.

Can it be denied, that the more valuable Doctrines of the Church of *England* are not with great Fervour preached in the Meetings of Protestant Dissenters? Or that there are not as visible Effects thereof conspicuous in the Lives of those frequenting them, as in the others? Must it not be owned, that nothing can more effectually conduce to the Happiness of the Government than the suppression of Vice, (the great Disturber of its Peace and Order) and the Advancement of Religion, the Palladium thereof? The former is generally, with the greatest Success obtained, by an Impartial execution of the Laws, the other by great and eminent Examples of Vertue, and a sincere Preaching of the Gospel of the ever Blessed Jesus, by Men of solid

lid Learning and Piety ; for hereby the Almighty Favour and Protection is most likely to be engaged, Fidelity and Allegiance to Her Majesty secured, Love, Unity, and Christian Charity amongst Her Subjects more universally disseminated ; and being under the benign Influences hereof, What Evil need We Fear ? What Good may we not expect ? Now what is so likely to defeat and prevent the concurrent Endeavours of all Good Men, altho' of several denominations, and different Sentiments in minuter matters, for the accomplishing of such noble Purposes, as the imposing new Difficulties and Hardships upon so great a part of the Kingdom as is likely to be affected by this Bill ?

There are, by the Constitution of our Government, and of Christianity too, some Rights which every English Man is intitled to ; and there are Obligations lying upon Men, antecedent to Humane Authority, how far these may be superseeded, or dispensed with, by the Municipal Laws of the Kingdom, is not my Business to inquire : But pretty Confident I am, that all violent Attempts, either to deprive Men of the One, or to conceal the Other, never contributed to the Peace and Safety of our Nation, or the Advancement of Religion. Whosoever shall read the most Impartial Histories of some late Reigns, and the Transactions of General Councils, will, I believe, concur in this Opinion.

I do know, there are some Men amongst us, who desirous to distinguish themselves, have upon occasion given vent to violent Transports of Passion, (whether out of Zeal for the Religion of our Church, and Safety of our State, or the



Emoluments thereof, I leave to their own Consciences and Conversations to determine) at the same time taking great liberty to revile Dissenters with many hard Names, and bitter Reproaches, founded generally on mistaken Notions of the nature of Schism, the Constitution of a Christian Church, and the necessary ends for which such Assemblies are instituted; the Obligation of humane Laws over the Consciences of Men. Now, not to mention the Arguments urged by Dissenters in their own Vindication, nor to insist on the Practice of Foreign Protestant Churches, or the Opinions of their famous Divines, whose Names and Works are, and will be esteemed by the Learned World: Let it be seriously considered, how above Two Thousand Ministers, most of them Men of Piety and admirable Learning, laborious in their Callings, beloved by their Parishioners, of small Dependencies, having Wives and Children to maintain; (for whom Humane Nature, unassisted with the Grace of Christianity, must needs have a very compassionate Concern for) did quit their Livings and Preferments at once, he must, I think, have a very confined Charity, that shall ascribe this to Peevishness, Obstinacy, and Humour.

I do confess the case is altered since the *Bartholomew* Act, to facilitate a Conformity to our Church; time having answered several of their Objections. Yet, since the Government hath given them a Toleration, and the Rods have lain rotting, and the Axes rusting, to use the words of one of the Gentlemen I have been mentioning, without complaining as he did, and no inconvenience either to Church or State observable thereon, It seems unreasonable, without fresh Provocation



cation to prepare new ones, not only for Dissenters, but moderate Conformists also.

I am not Pleading the Cause of *Nonconformity*, or Excusing the Distance, much less Justifying the Procedure of Dissenters, in not Complying in their Practice, so far at least, as in Judgment they Agreed at the *Savoy* Conference; Neither am I for Reviving the Controversy, which at this time I wish were totally laid aside; since, as usually managed, it hath Inflamed Mens Passions, Created further Degrees of Aversion to one another, and Prevented the Exercise of Christian Charity; which Divine Principle, were it diffused more generally through all Communities, we should soon find the Blessed Effects thereof, in abating that Pride and Rigour, that Perverseness and Censoriousness, that divides the Land; and also in sweetening the Tempers and Dispositions of Men, in preparing their Hearts and Minds for Peace and Union.

I heartily wish, that every thing may be avoided by all Dissenters, that may give the Government just Umbrage for to suspect them inclinable to Faction or Singularity; and that they would shew a readiness to Comply with such National Customs and Institutions, even in Religious Administrators, as are Grave, Decent, and consistent with the Precepts of the Gospel, putting the most Candid Construction on Things doubtfull, that they would not be Rigidly Scrupulous, and start at every thing of Ceremony, or place Religion in the Non-observance thereof, equal to the Solid and Substantial Duties of Love, Charity and Obedience; that they would oftener frequent the

Publick

Publick Devotions of our Church, the Lawfulness of which is assented to by their Occasional Appearances; that they would on all occasions express an Honourable Esteem for the Reverend Governors, and other the Famous Lights, fixed in our Establish'd Church, who have Eminently Appeared for, and Defended our Religion, against Atheism, Popery, and Antichristianism; that nothing of Frowardness or Discontent may be shewn at the Disposal of Honorary Rewards, and Marks of Favour, to those more particularly of the Church of *England*.

On the other hand, I equally desire, that none amongst us would overvalue, and too earnestly such things, as are Appendages to, rather than of the Essence of Christianity; esteeming such Terms of Communion necessary to be imposed, which were never made so by the great Author of the Gospel Institution; and with great Eagerness and Heat urge Compliances from that Subjection and Obedience that is due to Magistrates, and those General Rules in Holy Writ, relating to Order and Decency; which, it is very probable, were never intended to warrant such particular Applications; that they would not stamp with a Divine Right those things that are only from Humane Institution.

*Sir*, Could we all be perswaded seriously to consider the Native Beauty and Excellency of the Christian Religion, its tendency to promote Peace, Love and Charity throughout the Universe, the strong Motives and Incentives it affords to unite us all in the Bond of Perfection, its aptitude to elevate our Minds and Thoughts

Thoughts to Divine Objects, the Glories of a future State, and fix them in a Noble and Generous Pursuit after their Attainment, we should find, one would think little Leisure, and less Inclination to study and contrive how to afflict and disturb our Fellow-Creatures, our Fellow-Christians, Worshipping one and the same God, Professing the same Religión, Sealed with the same Sacramental Rites: Would we, with the Blessed Apostle, exercise Meekness, Patience, Benignity, mutual Forbearance, and Forgiveness; and whereunto we have attained, to walk by the Rules of our most Holy Religion, minding, and with steady Paces pursuing, the same Hope of our Calling, for which we profess our selves Candidates; we should find it the shortest way, either to that Uniformity contended for, or else to the Fruition of such a Happy State of Peace and Tranquility, in this lower Region of Mortality, as wil render our Worshipping Assemblies fit Resemblances of those Above.

Sir, I shall no longer detain you from the House, being the Day appointed for the Debate of this Bill: Therefore, without further Ceremony, or Excuse for the Length, Blots, and Imperfections hereof, I Subscribe my self,

S I R,

*Your most Humble Servant,*

N. N. C. L.

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